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ABSTRACT

This Executive Summary provides information and details about Reading Recovery, an early intervention program for young readers who are experiencing difficulty in their first year of reading instruction. The summary first explains that Reading Recovery is a one-to-one tutoring program designed to serve the lowest achieving readers in which children receive daily 30-minute lessons with the goal of bringing them up to average reading levels in their classes as quickly as possible. The summary then presents numbers and percentages for Reading Recovery's success in the United States in 1997-1998. It is divided into the following sections: Year at a Glance; What Is Reading Recovery?; Reading Recovery Council of North America; Reading Recovery in Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS); Descubriendo la Lectura (DLL) (Reading Recovery in Spanish); Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery; How Is Reading Recovery Implemented?; and Does Reading Recovery Work? (Contains 49 references, 5 tables of data, and 4 informational appendixes.) (NKA)

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ED 434 318

READING RECOVERY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1984
TO
1998

Reading Recovery Council of North America

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Year at a Glance 1997-1998

Reading Recovery is an early intervention program for young readers who are experiencing difficulty in their first year of reading instruction. Reading Recovery is a one-to-one tutoring program designed to serve the lowest achieving readers. Reading Recovery is provided by specially trained teachers. Children receive daily thirty-minute lessons with the goal of bringing them into the average reading levels in their classes as quickly as possible (typically in twelve to twenty weeks).

In the United States in 1997-1998 Reading Recovery obtained the following service levels:

122,935 Children served
73,610 Children served who discontinued
60% Proportion of children served who discontinued

88,929 Children who received full program (60 lessons)
73,610 Children who discontinued
83% Proportion of children who received full program and discontinued

10,612 Schools
3,596 Districts
559 Teacher Training Sites
23 University Training Centers
48 States plus Washington DC and Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS)
18,831 Reading Recovery Teachers
739 Teacher Leaders
35 University Faculty Trainers of Teacher Leaders
19,605 Total Trained and Active Reading Recovery Personnel

Included in the figures are 3,615 children served in Descubriendo La Lectura (Reading Recovery in Spanish). Of these, 2,543 received complete programs and discontinued at a rate of 84% (2,130 children).

In 1996-97, 5,965 Canadian children were served by 772 Reading Recovery Teachers and Teacher Leaders in 811 schools in nine Canadian Provinces and the Yukon Territory.

This Executive Summary provides much greater detail about the successes of the past year and the continued success of Reading Recovery in the lives of children as they proceed through their elementary school years.

Served: Program children and children who entered Reading Recovery but did not receive a minimum of 60 lessons because they moved, were absent for extended periods of time, or the school year ended prior to completion of lessons. This number includes the subcategory of Program Children (see below).

Discontinued: Reading Recovery children who were released from the Reading Recovery program reading within the average reading level of the class.

Program: Reading Recovery children who received a minimum of 60 lessons or were discontinued prior to receiving 60 lessons.

Contents

Year at a Glance	*inside front cover*
What Is Reading Recovery?	*1*
Program History	*1*
Program Overview	*2*
Characteristics of Reading Recovery Lessons	*7*
Reading Recovery Council of North America	*10*
Reading Recovery in Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS)	*12*
Descubriendo La Lectura (DLL) (Reading Recovery in Spanish)	*13*
Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery	*16*
How Is Reading Recovery Implemented?	*18*
Implementing Reading Recovery	*18*
Costs of Implementation	*20*
Benefits of Implementation	*21*
Scope of Implementation	*22*
Does Reading Recovery Work?	*24*
Research and Data Collection	*24*
Follow-Up Studies	*26*
Early Intervention Program Comparisons	*29*
Cost Effectiveness	*30*
What Program Participants Say	*31*
References	*35*
Appendix	
Reading Recovery: A Part of Comprehensive School Reform	*38*
Exploring Misconceptions Associated with Reading Recovery	*42*
Phonological Awareness and Reading Recovery	*44*
Facing the Challenge of Learning Disabilities	*47*
RRCNA Membership Form	*49*
Reading Recovery University Training Centers	*50*

The Reading Recovery Executive Summary is published annually by The Reading Recovery Program at The Ohio State University and the Reading Recovery Council of North America.

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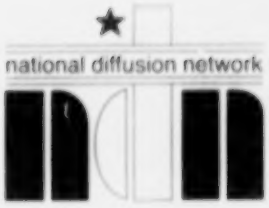

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What Is Reading Recovery?

What is Reading Recovery?

Reading Recovery is a short term, early intervention program for young readers who are experiencing difficulty in their first year of reading instruction. Such children often go through a cycle of confusion, frustration, and anxiety. This pattern of thinking quickly leads to feelings of failure for these "at-risk" children. They often fall behind their classmates and require expensive long-term remedial help, and some never learn to read.

The Reading Recovery program is designed to serve the lowest achieving readers in a first-grade class. In the Reading Recovery program, children receive individual daily lessons from a specially trained teacher.

By intervening early on, Reading Recovery can halt the debilitating cycle of failure for at-risk children and can enable them to become independent readers and writers who can fully participate with other average first grade students in their schools or classrooms.

Program History

Reading Recovery was developed by New Zealand educator and researcher Dr. Marie M. Clay. Dr. Clay conducted observational research in the mid-1960s that enabled her to design ways for detecting early reading difficulties of children. In the mid-1970s, she developed Reading Recovery procedures with teachers and tested the program in New Zealand. The success of this pilot program led to the nationwide adoption of Reading Recovery in New Zealand in the early 1980s.

The New Zealand program was monitored closely by a group of researchers at The Ohio State University who were looking for alternatives to traditional remedial reading programs. In 1985-1986, following a successful pilot year, funding was made available to implement Reading Recovery in Ohio as a collaborative effort by The Ohio Department of Education, Columbus Public Schools, and The Ohio State University. In 1987, the U. S. Department of Education's National Diffusion Network (NDN) selected Reading Recovery as a developer/demonstrator project and provided funding to help disseminate the program to school districts in other states. Four educators from outside Ohio received training at The Ohio State University during the 1987-1988 academic year. They returned to their home states the following year to begin serving children and training teachers.

Today Reading Recovery exists as a national program in New Zealand and is widely implemented in 48 of the United States, nine Canadian provinces and the Yukon Territory, Australia, the United Kingdom and the U.S. Department of Defense Dependent School System. An estimated 140,000 North

American children will be served in the 1998-1999 academic school year by Reading Recovery educators.

Program Overview

The Reading Recovery program in North America includes four components: a program for children, a program for educators, network activities and research and evaluation.

Program for Children

Children are selected for the Reading Recovery program based on teacher judgement and measures of assessment from Clay's *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*. The student's regular classroom instruction is supplemented with daily one-to-one 30-minute lessons for 12 to 20 weeks with a specially trained Reading Recovery teacher.

Reading Recovery students participate in an instructional program which is characterized by individual instruction and accelerated learning. Daily instruction continues until the student can read within or above the class average and has demonstrated the use of independent reading and writing strategies. The student's program is then 'discontinued,' providing the opportunity for another child to enter the Reading Recovery program.

Approximately 560,000 children have benefited from Reading Recovery since its introduction to North America in 1985. Over 83 percent of the children who have had at least 60 lessons have become independent readers. Longitudinal studies conducted in New Zealand and the United States show that Reading Recovery helps a large majority of low-progress readers achieve continued reading success.

Components of Reading Recovery in North America

Program for Children
Children who are the lowest achievers in their first grade class receive intensive one-to-one instruction for 30 minutes daily. After 12-20 weeks, most attain an average or better reading level and continue to make progress with regular classroom instruction.

Research and Evaluation
Reading Recovery is a data based intervention. Numerous individual studies support the program's success. Ongoing data collection for every child served ensures the integrity of the Reading Recovery program.

Program for Educators
Reading Recovery educators participate in a full year of university-based training followed by extensive, continuing professional development at the local, regional, and national levels.

Network Activities
Reading Recovery educators, administrators, and institutions form an early literacy network dedicated to making it possible for all children to become literate. Network activities include research, publications, and professional development.

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An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement

At the beginning of each academic year, children having difficulty learning to read and write are selected for Reading Recovery using classroom teacher judgment and results from the six assessments of *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (Clay, 1993a). Looking across measures, teachers first select the lowest achieving children. Measures on the Observation Survey are also used to determine the progress made by children who receive the intervention. The following six measures comprise the Observation Survey which is administered individually:

1. Letter Identification. The child is asked to identify 54 different characters, including upper- and lower-case letters and conventional print for "a" and "g."

2. Word Test. The child is asked to read a list of 20 words drawn from the words used most frequently in early reading material. Three alternative lists are available for testing and retesting.

3. Concepts about Print. The child is asked to perform a variety of tasks while an examiner reads a short, specifically designed book. The tasks check to find out what the child knows about the way spoken language is put into print. The test reflects important concepts to be acquired by children in the beginning stages of learning to read. Two versions of text are available.

4. Writing Vocabulary. Within a 10-minute period, the child is asked to write all the words he/she knows. Within the guidelines for testing, examiners are permitted to prompt as needed. The score on this measure is the number of words spelled accurately.

5. Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words. The examiner reads a short sentence or two and the child is asked to record word by word the sounds heard. The scores represent every sound recorded accurately in this assessment of phonemic and/or orthographic awareness. Three sentence variations are used.

6. Text Reading Level. The child is asked to read a series of increasingly more difficult texts. The examiner provides a minimal, scripted introduction and records reading behaviors using a running record. Test levels are drawn from a basal reading system that is not a part of Reading Recovery or classroom instruction.

Program for Educators

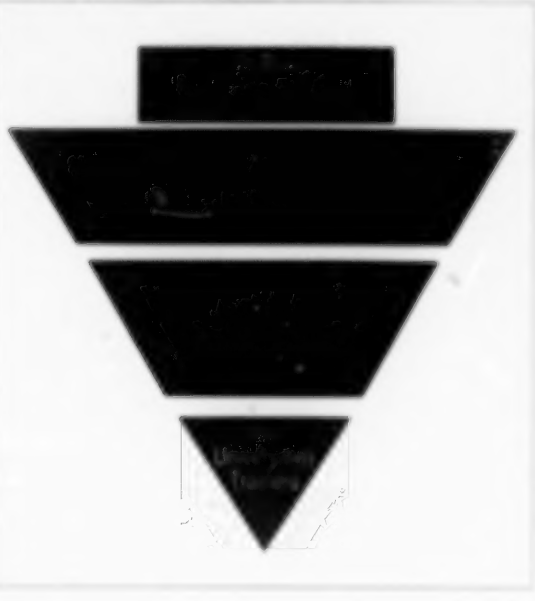
The remarkable progress that children make in Reading Recovery demonstrates that reading failure is preventable for many at-risk students. The key to success for such children is specialized teaching that will enable them to improve quickly -- before they are labeled as failures -- without disrupting their regular classroom curriculum.

Accelerated learning for at-risk children is impossible without experienced, highly skilled teachers who are experts at observing children

and making the moment-to-moment decisions necessary to support independent learning. Developing expertise at this level requires substantially more training than traditional professional development models can deliver. Rather than hearing about and then performing a set of teaching activities, Reading Recovery educators develop analytical skills and use them "to adjust and frame instruction for children" (Pinnell and McCarrier, 1994, p. 7). They do so through a combination of academic course work, intensive interaction with colleagues, and ongoing work with children. As a result, their "interactions with students come out of a knowledge base that is established through observation and experience and constantly checked with evidence from children's responses" (p. 7).

Reading Recovery training operates on three levels: teacher, teacher leaders who train the teachers, and trainers of teacher leaders. This instructional model is illustrated in Figure 1. The training consists of one year of instruction, followed by extensive continuing contact for professional development. Reading Recovery teachers, teacher leaders, and trainers all teach children daily.

Figure 1. The Reading Recovery Instructional Model



Levels of Training

Reading Recovery Teachers

Teacher training for Reading Recovery teachers is graduate level instruction, provided by teacher leaders at approved district-level training sites. The specialized training prepares experienced teachers to provide Reading Recovery instruction for children in their schools. During the training year, teachers attend weekly classes, work with at least eight children and participate in school visits with the teacher leader and colleagues. Reading Recovery teachers in training maintain other responsibilities for teaching in their non-Reading Recovery training and teaching time. The Reading Recovery training curriculum integrates theory and practice and is characterized by intensive interaction with colleagues in 'behind the glass' sessions which serve as a shared experience for the group to discuss. The teachers reflect on their professional tasks in the light of literacy theory and peer support over an extended period of time. Reading Recovery teachers in training become literacy experts with highly developed observational skills and a repertoire of intervention strategies that can be tailored to meet the individual needs of the at-risk student.

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Following the training year, teachers spend a portion of their day teaching Reading Recovery students (a minimum of eight students a year) and the rest of the day with other teaching responsibilities. Reading Recovery teachers continue to develop professionally through ongoing interaction with their colleagues and instructors.

Behind The Glass

In most of the weekly sessions throughout the training year members of Reading Recovery classes observe two individual lessons taught behind a one-way mirror.

Lessons are taught by two in-training colleagues each working with one of his/her students. Guided by the teacher leader or trainer, the observing teachers engage in an intensive discussion of their observations. After the lessons, all participants meet for a reflective and analytical discussion of the lessons during which links are made between theory and practice.

Teacher Leaders

Teacher leaders are selected by a school district or consortium of school districts that have made a long-term commitment to early literacy intervention. The selected teacher leader candidate is required to have a master's degree in order to undertake Reading Recovery training at this level. The teacher leader candidate is sent to one of 25 university training centers in North America for a year of intensive, full-time training. Teacher leader training is provided by trainers of teacher leaders and prepares qualified educators to teach Reading Recovery students, train Reading Recovery teachers, and with the assistance of a site coordinator, operate a Reading Recovery training site.

University training of the teacher leader requires:

- the daily teaching of four Reading Recovery students (at least eight students during the training year)
- participation in a graduate-level curriculum including clinical and leadership practicums, as well as seminars in reading and writing theory
- field experiences with Reading Recovery teacher training classes
- attendance at professional development conferences and institutes
- working with district and site administrators to prepare the site for program implementation.

Following the training year, the trained teacher leaders return to their home districts and work full time teaching children, training teachers in Reading Recovery, and performing other duties related to the maintenance of a site.

Trainers

Instruction for trainers of teacher leaders is provided at the postdoctoral level in North America by The Ohio State University and Texas Woman's University. The one-year residency program prepares university faculty to teach Reading Recovery children, provide

instruction to teacher leaders in training, and operate a university training center.

A Network of Educators and Institutions

As the scope of the instructional program suggests, Reading Recovery is not a teaching methodology that can be packaged and delivered through a set of materials, a workshop, or a series of courses. Reading Recovery is instead a "system-wide intervention that involves a network of education, communication, and collegiality designed to create a culture of learning that promotes literacy for high-risk children." (Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord, 1993, p. 2.)

The benefits of incorporating Reading Recovery extend well beyond the success of individual at-risk students who complete the program. The results achieved by the teachers and children involved in Reading Recovery demonstrate for entire districts the impact that powerful teaching can have on low-progress children. Through interaction with Reading Recovery teachers, other classroom teachers often begin to construct new theories about how children learn -- theories that tend to carry over into classroom instruction.

Educators and institutions that have adopted Reading Recovery form an extensive network to support early literacy. In 1997-1998, the Reading Recovery network in the United States included 10,612 schools, 3,596 districts, 559 teacher training sites, and 23 university teacher leader training centers. The Reading Recovery personnel of these institutions includes 19,605 educators, including 18,831 Reading Recovery teachers, 739 teacher leaders, and 35 university faculty. These individuals work together to preserve the principles associated with Reading Recovery and improve its effectiveness as an early intervention program in North America.

Research and Evaluation

Research documenting the success of Reading Recovery is gathered extensively at the national, state, and local levels. Each teacher leader prepares a site report containing quantitative and qualitative data, documenting the progress of every Reading Recovery student at his or her site. Reading Recovery teachers collect data on every student they tutor, regardless of how few lessons the student has received. Each student's scores on measures of reading and writing achievement are reported to the National Data Evaluation Center at The Ohio

State University. The Center analyzes the data to measure the program's effectiveness. This process of analyzing data for every child served in North America helps to ensure the program's integrity.

Characteristics of Reading Recovery Lessons

Individualized Instruction

Many early literacy programs try to move at-risk children along an artificial literacy continuum by teaching skills that somehow "add up" to good reading and writing.

In contrast, Reading Recovery teachers carefully observe each student "as a reader and writer, with particular attention to what the child can do within the processes of reading and writing." (Clay, 1993b, p. 7.)

By working from the unique knowledge base of at-risk students in a one-to-one lesson format, Reading Recovery teachers move well beyond the traditional "skills and drills" approach associated with remedial reading programs. While the parts of the lesson are the same on most days, "the particular books read, the messages written, and interactions the teacher has with the child are individually crafted to meet the needs of the particular student. Thus each lesson and the path of progress for each child are different." (Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord, 1993, p. 5.)

Reading Recovery and the National Diffusion Network

The National Diffusion Network (NDN) is a program of the United States Department of Education. In operation since 1974, NDN is a nationwide system established to help school systems improve through the adoption of locally developed, rigorously evaluated, exemplary educational programs. NDN selected Reading Recovery as a Developer/Demonstrator project in 1987 and provided funding to disseminate the program outside of Ohio. Since 1987, NDN has supported Reading Recovery research, national information dissemination, training, and administrative efforts on behalf of the national program.

A major component of the NDN Reading Recovery program is the work of the Reading Recovery National Data Evaluation Center, housed at The Ohio State University. The Center collects data from program participants in the United States each year, including pre- and post-intervention measures on every child who receives Reading Recovery instruction. In addition, the annual site reports made to the Center provide qualitative data on program implementation in the form of responses to surveys from Reading Recovery educators, administrators and parents of Reading Recovery students.

Working with Books and Stories

Reading Recovery students work in the context of an entire book or a complete story, rather than with unconnected sentences or word lists. By reading and writing continuous texts, children learn to use many different aspects of printed text including letters, words, sentences, and pictures to understand complete stories, just as successful readers do. Each lesson is organized "so that students, no matter how inexperienced they are with print, will be able to act like readers and writers. They learn to read fluently, using the phrasing that good readers use, to write messages, and to look at print." (Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord, 1993, p. 5.)

The Reading Recovery Lesson

In schools where Reading Recovery has been implemented, trained teachers use their judgment and a battery of six measures called *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (Clay, 1993a) to select the most at-risk children from the lowest-achieving children in the first grade classrooms (see page 3 for a description of the Observation Survey). In addition to regular classroom reading instruction, these children receive one-to-one Reading Recovery lessons for 30 minutes each day.

The first two weeks of each child's program are designed to develop the student's strengths. This period, referred to as "roaming around the known," is comprised of a variety of activities based on what the child can already do. The child's confidence is built and a rapport between the teacher and child is established. The teacher uses this time to learn about the child's abilities, build a foundation for learning, and get the passive learner active. After the "roaming around the known" sessions, lessons begin. Each lesson includes the following:

- Reading familiar stories.
- Reading a story that was read for the first time the day before.
- Working with letters and/or words using magnetic letters.
- Writing a story.
- Assembling a cut-up story.
- Reading a new book that will be read independently the next day.

During these authentic reading and writing activities, the teacher demonstrates and teaches for problem-solving strategies and then provides just enough support to help the child develop these effective strategies. The child learns to use both reading and writing strategies flexibly and independently.

Accelerated Learning

The goal of Reading Recovery is accelerated learning. Each child is expected to make faster-than-average progress so that he or she can catch up with other children in the class. The majority of Reading Recovery children typically reach an average reading level and meet criteria for skilled reading behavior (as determined by objective measures) after 12-20 weeks of daily instruction. During this period, they continue to work in the regular classroom for all but 30 minutes each day.

Working from Strengths

Accelerated learning is possible because Reading Recovery teachers base their instruction on carefully documented daily observations of what each child already knows about reading and writing. This approach creates efficiency. All future instruction works from the child's strengths. The teacher does not waste time teaching anything that is already known (Clay, 1993b).

Independent Learning

The goal of Reading Recovery is not just to improve the reading and writing ability of at-risk children, but to help them learn how to continue improving on their own, so that later remediation is unnecessary. With the assistance of their Reading Recovery teacher, children learn the strategies that good readers use to solve their reading problems "on the run" while reading real books. Reading Recovery instruction continues until the child has a self-extending system for literacy learning. Only then is the student's program "discontinued," providing an opportunity for another child to enter the program.

Table 1. End of Year Status of Reading Recovery Students 1997-98

Discontinued from Full Program	73,610	59.9%
In Program At End of Year: Recommendation for Additional Lessons	25,196	20.5%
Referred for Other Programs	5,571	4.6%
Moved or Withdrawn for Valid Reasons	16,459	13.4%
Status Unknown	99	0.1%
Total Served One or More Lessons	122,935	100%

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Reading Recovery Council of North America

Reading Recovery Council of North America

The Reading Recovery Council of North America is a not-for-profit association of Reading Recovery professionals, advocates and partners. The Council provides a network of opportunities for leadership and professional development. It is an advocate for Reading Recovery throughout North America. Over eight thousand individuals have become members of the Council since its establishment in 1995.

The Council's membership is open to anyone interested in Reading Recovery and early literacy. Members include Reading Recovery teachers, teacher leaders, site coordinators, university trainers, and partners who are classroom teachers, early literacy educators, Title 1 teachers, school principals and administrators, school board members, researchers, parents, and community members.

In pursuit of its vision, mission, and purpose, the Council offers a wide variety of programs and services. These include the network of colleagues who are members throughout North America; the biannual international journal of early literacy, *Literacy, Teaching and Learning*; the Council newsletter, *Council Connections*; *The Running Record*, a biannual refereed publication for Reading Recovery teachers, teacher leaders and trainers, and the *Network News*, a biannual publication for Reading Recovery teacher leaders, trainers, and site coordinators.

VISION

The vision of RRCNA is that children will be proficient readers and writers by the end of the first grade.

MISSION

The mission of RRCNA is to ensure access to Reading Recovery for every child who needs its support.

PURPOSE

The purpose of RRCNA is to sustain the integrity of Reading Recovery and expand its implementation by increasing the number of individuals who understand, support, and collaborate to achieve the mission of the Council.

In addition, the Council produces and distributes a variety of special publications such as *Leadership for Literacy: A Guidebook for School-Based Planning*, designed to assist schools in integrating Reading Recovery into the total planning for Title 1 educational programming; *The Site Coordinator's Handbook*, a comprehensive guide for Reading Recovery Site Coordinators; and the *Reading Recovery Booklist* in English and Spanish, for use by trained Reading Recovery professionals.

During the past year the Council published a *Volunteer Literacy Manual* designed to assist schools and community organizations in organizing themselves to involve volunteers in supporting the early literacy learning of children in Reading Recovery and primary school classrooms. The Council also began distribution of training videotapes made available from the University of Illinois and The Ohio State University to assist in training of Reading Recovery teachers and teacher leaders.

The Council sponsors and supports professional development for Reading Recovery personnel through the annual National Conference as well as special institutes, leadership academies, and special focus symposia. These activities strengthen the implementation of Reading Recovery and provide opportunities for Reading Recovery personnel to collaborate with early literacy advocates and other education professionals in ongoing professional development. The Council also monitors the delivery of Reading Recovery training through its policy on educational events and opportunities.

The Council has an elected Board of Directors with representatives of Reading Recovery teachers, teacher leaders, site coordinators, university trainers, and partners. The Board also includes designated representatives from the Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery and the Descubriendo La Lectura National Collaborative. During the past year the Council Board of Directors voted to include, as a new member of the Board, a Dean from one of the universities which provides Reading Recovery teacher leader training.

During the past year the Council Board completed the strategic plan for the organization. The plan outlines the Council's goals and objectives in four crucial areas: governance, membership, implementation and institutionalization of Reading Recovery, and research and evaluation. The plan sets forth a wide variety of tasks which will be undertaken by the Council Board, staff, and Committees in order to accomplish the established goals.

The Board's Standing Committee structure enables the Council to involve many members in discussions concerning the following areas:

- development and fundraising
- membership services
- guidelines and standards in Reading Recovery
- implementation and planning for Reading Recovery throughout the continent
- publications and communications within the Council and external constituents
- research into the effectiveness of Reading Recovery and into arenas which will inform and improve the practice of Reading Recovery
- training for Reading Recovery personnel

In 1998 all the Program Standing Committees met for the first time in conjunction with the National Reading Recovery Conference.

For more information contact the Reading Recovery Council of North America, 1929 Kenny Road, Suite 100, Columbus, Ohio 43210-1069, Telephone 614/292-7111, FAX 614/292-4404, www.readingrecovery.org.

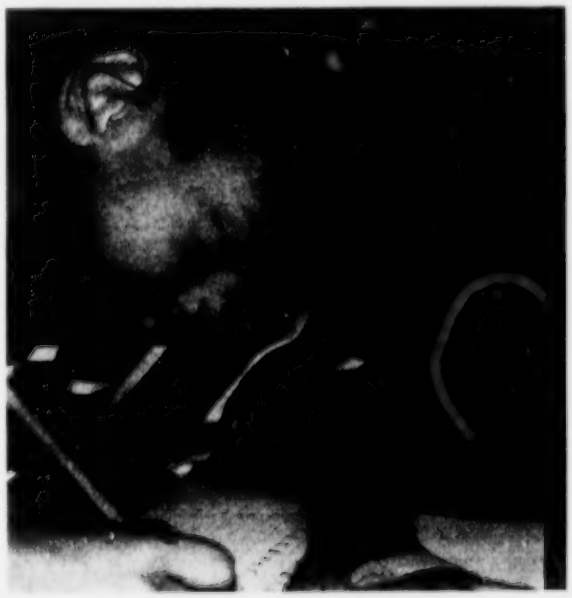
Reading Recovery in Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DoDDS)

Reading Recovery in Department of Defense Dependent Schools

Reading Recovery has been a part of the overseas military school system for the past six years. The Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DoDDS) include sites in Europe and the Pacific. In Europe, three teacher leaders work in seven different countries (Iceland, Italy — including Sicily, Spain, Belgium, Germany, England, and the Azores in Portugal) supporting seventy Reading Recovery teachers in thirty different schools. In the Pacific Region one teacher leader supports forty-two Reading Recovery teachers in three districts including ten schools in Japan (Okinawa), Korea, and Guam.

In the DoDDS system there are several unique circumstances that provide challenges for Reading Recovery. Children arrive overseas with a military parent and remain in DoDDS schools for a typical tour of two or three years. The rate of mobility is similar to that of a large urban district in the United States. Emergency leave (families return to the United States to deal with family illness or other emergencies), security issues, extended vacations, long-term deployments of the military sponsor(s) to other areas such as Bosnia or Hungary, or the Middle East, Saudi Arabia, or Persian Gulf, and distance between training sites create challenges for implementation of Reading Recovery.

Nevertheless, a visit to any DoDDS site provides the opportunity to see Reading Recovery as it looks everywhere in the world. Lessons follow the same format and depend on the teachers making exquisite teaching decisions to support the child's independent reading and writing. Special travel arrangements facilitated by the DoDDS headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, make continuing contact and professional development a reality for teachers and teacher leaders.



Descubriendo La Lectura (Reading Recovery in Spanish)

Descubriendo La Lectura: Reading Recovery in Spanish

Descubriendo La Lectura (DLL) is a reconstruction of Reading Recovery for Spanish-speaking children. First grade students who are receiving their initial literacy instruction in Spanish and who have demonstrated they are at risk of learning how to read and write in their native language are eligible for the program. The intent of this early intervention program is to enable bilingual students to develop reading and writing strategies. The effective and efficient use of these strategies makes it possible for them to work within average group settings in bilingual classrooms.

Descubriendo La Lectura began ten years ago in Tucson, Arizona. It has since become a national initiative. DLL sites now operate in California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Texas, and Washington. The Collaborative for Reading Recovery in Spanish/Descubriendo La Lectura is composed of university trainers, teacher leaders, teachers, and school district personnel. The Collaborative focuses on projects and issues that deal with the validation of procedures, monitoring implementation of Descubriendo La Lectura, and researching the effectiveness of the program.

One of the first research projects conducted by the Collaborative was the reconstruction of the *Observation Survey* tasks (*Instrumento de Observación*) and scoring procedures. A reconstruction of the tasks and scoring procedures was necessary in order to account for Spanish literacy development. The research conducted on *El Instrumento de Observación* also established validity and reliability of the tasks among the different Spanish dialects spoken within the United States. Currently, Texas Woman's University is overseeing the full Spanish translation of Marie Clay's *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement and Reading Recovery: A Guidebook for Teachers in Training*. The full translation of these texts will make it possible for Latin America to train and implement Descubriendo La Lectura in the future.

In the spring of 1997, a national study of former DLL students then in the second and third grade was conducted under the direction of Dr. Kathy Escamilla. This research revealed that the DLL program is having a positive impact on Spanish speaking students. 92% of the former DLL students in second grade and 93% of former DLL students in third grade met or exceeded the average band on Spanish Text Reading. A standardized Spanish reading measure (SABE-2 and SABE-3) also yielded positive results. 75% of the second graders and 79% of the third graders met or exceeded the average band on the standardized Spanish reading measure.

During the 1997-98 academic year, 3,615 students were served in Descubriendo La Lectura. Of these students, 2,543 received a full program. Of the full program students, 2,130 successfully completed the program. This represents an 84% discontinuing rate for DLL students.

Descubriendo La Lectura is an integral part of the Reading Recovery Council of North America. This provides the structure for Reading Recovery in Spanish to be supported by the Reading Recovery standards and guidelines as well as the Reading Recovery trademark. An elected Board member represents DLL and serves as the Chairperson of the DLL Standing Committee of the RRCNA Board of Directors. The DLL Standing Committee is composed of university trainers, teacher leaders, a teacher, and a site coordinator. They meet with the Collaborative twice a year to communicate and provide direction for the continued development and implementation of Descubriendo La Lectura. The DLL Standing Committee s goals include:

- Support the training of DLL teacher leaders and trainers.
- Search for appropriate Spanish texts for the implementation and assessment of DLL.
- Provide a system of communication to inform and update individuals in DLL and the bilingual education community.
- Conduct research on DLL to establish its effectiveness.
- Facilitate the implementation of DLL in bilingual education program throughout the United States.

The theoretical principles that underlie Reading Recovery are the same for Descubriendo La Lectura. The differences between the two programs lie in some procedural and training issues due to the fact that English and Spanish function differently as languages. Therefore, DLL-specific training is required to deliver DLL to Spanish-speaking students. The Collaborative and RRCNA have established specific standards and guidelines to account for these implementation differences. These DLL standards and guidelines can now be found in the RRCNA Standards and Guidelines publication. The standards and guidelines address issues pertaining to training models, teacher and teacher leader qualifications, instructional setting for students, and Descubriendo La Lectura research and development participation. Sites interested in implementing DLL should contact university training centers for additional information.

Excerpts from the Standards and Guidelines for Participation in Descubriendo La Lectura (Also see RRCNA Standards and Guidelines publication.)

- *Instructional Setting:* Students need to be in a bilingual education program receiving Spanish literacy instruction throughout the academic year. It is strongly recommended that students continue literacy development in Spanish beyond the third grade.
- *Teacher and Teacher Leader Training:* Teachers and teacher leaders must be certified bilingual educators with experience in a primary bilingual education classroom. If candidates initially are trained in Reading Recovery in English, they need to receive an additional year of training to serve Spanish-speaking students. This process is called "Bridging from English to Spanish." If the

teachers or teacher leaders initially are trained in Spanish, they need to receive an additional year of training to serve English speaking students ("Bridging from Spanish to English"). The additional year requires participation on a one to two week initial orientation and at least two course sessions that involve use of the one-way glass. Candidates continue to teach two DLL students throughout the year.

- *Research and Development:* Members of the Collaborative provide longitudinal data on children who receive Descubriendo La Lectura. With the exception of *Instrumento de Observación*, research studies which utilize any of the Spanish language materials developed by members of the Collaborative require written permission from RRCNA.

Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery

Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery

The Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery (CIRR), located in Toronto at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education, University of Toronto, was created in 1992 in order to train and support teacher leaders in Canada. It is a non-profit organization. Its Board of Governors is responsible for the appointment of staff, preparation and management of fiscal matters, and ensuring that standards are adhered to.

The Canadian Institute was granted the right to register the royalty free trademark in Canada by Dame Marie Clay. This was done in order to ensure quality control of this intervention program. Support for the Canadian Institute comes from government grants, donations and partnerships with the business community, and membership fees.

The Western Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery (WCIRR), located in Manitoba, was established in 1995 through a partnership amongst the Manitoba Department of Education and Training, the University of Winnipeg, and St. James-Assinboia School Division #2. The WCIRR works in collaboration with the Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery and under the guidelines set by the Board of Governors.

Over the past 5 years Reading Recovery has expanded to 9 of the 10 Canadian provinces and 1 territory. This now includes British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and most recently Prince Edward Island and the Yukon territory. The governments of Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and the Yukon have formed partnerships with the local school districts in order to work towards full implementation of the program.

In Canada the Reading Recovery program has been tracked on a National basis since 1995. Each year a series of reports are written which describe the growth and outcomes of the program both provincially and nationally. Presently there are 2 Trainers, 61 Teacher Leaders working at 47 training centers across the country. During the 1996-97 year 875 teachers provided Reading Recovery to approximately 6000 children. This represented a 89% growth over the previous year.

Marie Clay has granted the province of Nova Scotia, in partnership with the CIRR, the right to redevelop the Reading Recovery program in the French language. Initial work has begun on the *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (Clay 1993). Funding for this part of the project and for the training of a Francophone Trainer has come from the governments of Nova Scotia and Canada.

The CIRR Board of Governors is presently working on a strategic plan in order to support the Canadian Institute and to facilitate the growth of Reading Recovery across Canada. The Institute is also working in collaboration with the RRCNA in fulfilling the vision that children will be proficient readers and writers by the end of the first grade.

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How is Reading Recovery Implemented?

How is Reading Recovery Implemented?

Reading Recovery is a system intervention that operates within entire school districts. Districts that have adopted the program according to established guidelines are designated as Reading Recovery sites. Each approved site is staffed by trained Reading Recovery teachers, one or more teacher leaders, and a site coordinator (administrator). Reading Recovery teachers spend one-half of each school day working one-to-one with a minimum of eight children over the course of a year. The other half of the day often is spent teaching either as a classroom or a small-group teacher. Teacher leaders work with students, train teachers, provide continuing staff development for previously trained teachers, and participate in the Reading Recovery network. In 1997-1998, approximately 559 Reading Recovery sites, consisting of 3,596 school districts, operated in the United States and Department of Defense Dependent Schools.

Implementing Reading Recovery at the District Level

It generally takes a school district or consortium of districts two years to implement a Reading Recovery site: one year to have a qualified member of its staff trained as a teacher leader at a university training center, and a second year to establish a teacher training site.

The Application Process

To become an approved training site, a school district or consortium begins by applying to a University Training Center to have a qualified member of its teaching staff trained as a teacher leader. (A list of University Training Centers appears on page 50.) As part of the application process, prospective sites must secure financial support within the district, obtain the approval of the district superintendent, and reach an agreement with a local university or college to award graduate credit to the teachers who will be trained at the site.

The applying district or consortium also selects an administrator in the district to assume administrative responsibilities for Reading Recovery. This "site coordinator" oversees the preparation of the facility, manages the budget, negotiates contracts, and acts as administrative liaison with the Reading Recovery network.

The Training Year

Applicants are selected for the program in the spring, and the yearlong residency program begins the following autumn. The curriculum consists of a clinical practicum, a seminar in theory, and a supervision/leadership practicum. Additionally, teacher leaders and trainers are involved with the following activities during their year in training: teaching eight Reading Recovery students, conducting colleague visits to observe other class members teaching, observing and participating in the training of Reading Recovery teachers, and attending professional development conferences and institutes.

During the training year, teacher leaders work with their site coordinators to prepare the site for its first year of operation. They inform appropriate groups about the program, prepare the space where the teacher training classes will be held, order materials for teacher training, secure secretarial support for the program, and assist in the selection of appropriate teachers for the training class.

After the Training Year

Following their training year, teacher leaders and site coordinators work together to maintain the site. Teacher leaders train new teachers and visit previously trained teachers, conduct continuing contact sessions (ongoing staff development for experienced teachers), collect data on children served, and prepare an annual site report.

Following the training year, Reading Recovery educators at all levels hone their expertise through a variety of professional development activities, including regional meetings, site visits from instructors, national conferences and training seminars, and information updates — all designed to further their professional development. They also participate in the Reading Recovery network through data collection, committee work, participation in research projects, and other activities.

Teacher Training at Established Reading Recovery Sites

To implement Reading Recovery in districts where the program has been adopted, qualified teachers enroll in a yearlong academic course taught by a certified teacher leader. Through interactive clinical experiences and theoretical study guided by a teacher leader, teachers learn how to implement all components of a Reading Recovery lesson and to select teaching procedures that facilitate accelerated learning for individual students.

Teachers in training continue to work full-time in their school districts as they receive instruction in Reading Recovery teaching. The most common arrangement during the training year and subsequent years is for the teachers to spend a half day teaching Reading Recovery students and the other half performing other assigned duties. Teachers work with a minimum of eight Reading Recovery students over the year. Many teachers teach in the classroom the other half day or work with small groups of students in Title 1 programs or other district programs.

Implementation Models

Implementation and institutionalization are processes of constructing communication networks, analyzing the priorities of the host system, and intentionally nurturing the sense of accomplishment for all those involved. The variety of implementation models used throughout the United States and Canada reflect the efforts of Reading Recovery professionals to accommodate and strengthen the existing vital processes of many diverse host districts.

Throughout the 48 states and nine provinces where Reading Recovery teachers and teacher leaders are working, they are employed in several configurations using their literacy skills as classroom teachers (first grade, kindergarten, special education, or other grades), teaching literacy groups (Title 1, language arts, or early literacy), providing staff development, serving as content specialists, or acting as part-time program administrators.

Additional variations for stable and mutually beneficial implementation seem promising because of the reauthorization of Title 1, the emphasis on inclusion in Special Education initiatives, school reform, and the maturation of Reading Recovery within complex host systems.

The Costs of Implementation

The costs of adopting Reading Recovery include the costs associated with the establishment of a site as well as the ongoing costs of site maintenance. Start-up costs include tuition, materials, and living expenses for the teacher leader in training; the cost of building a one-way glass at the new site for teacher training; and a portion of the site coordinator's salary during the training year. Following the training year, new sites provide funding for teacher leader salaries, professional development for teacher leaders, site staff support, tuition for teacher training, and training materials. For specific information regarding costs, contact the University Training Center in your area. See the list of Centers at the end of this Executive Summary.

Implementation Issues That May Affect Reading Recovery Results

- Quality of Training and Teaching
- Level of Coverage
- Daily Service
- Teacher Leader Roles and Workloads
- Shared Ownership and Collaboration
- Informed and Supportive Administrators

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Factors when determining implementation costs in a local educational system

Initial training and start-up costs should be averaged across several years
Initial investment in non-consumable books and materials should be averaged across several years.
Teacher salaries should be calculated only for the portion of the day when teachers are working with Reading Recovery students.
Costs per child should count all children for whom valuable service is provided across the year and not be limited to discontinued children.
Costs that the district would be incurring to serve these children whether or not Reading Recovery is implemented should be considered.
Costs of long-term services needed by children not served by Reading Recovery should be considered as long-term expenses (retention, special education, Title 1, other reading specialist services, etc.)
All program benefits, including those that are not easily calculated, should be reported.

The Benefits of Implementation

Implementing Reading Recovery requires a substantial commitment on the part of the host district(s). The integrated nature of the instructional programs for children and educators, the use of quantitative data to measure the results of the intervention on all children served, the strong professional development model -- these and the other features of the program simultaneously ensure its effectiveness and demand an exceptional level of support from participating individuals and institutions. In exchange for this support, Reading Recovery sites empower at-risk children to break free from the cycle of learning failure and empower teachers to become true change agents in their districts.

The benefits of adopting Reading Recovery extend well beyond the success of individual at-risk students who complete the program. The results achieved by the teachers and children involved in Reading Recovery demonstrate for the entire district the impact that powerful teaching can have on low-progress children. Through interaction with Reading Recovery teachers, classroom teachers often begin to construct new theories about how children learn. Teachers tend to use these new theories in implementing classroom instruction.

Many districts that have adopted Reading Recovery have enjoyed the additional benefit of lower costs for special services.

Reading Recovery has shown to reduce the rate of retention, special education placements, and remediation beyond first grade. No time is lost delivering the services that will affect these changes because at most sites teachers undergo training outside of regular school hours and begin working with students as they train.

Scope of Implementation

Figures 2 and 3 show the growth of the Reading Recovery program in the United States since it was first implemented in 1984.

Figure 2. Reading Recovery Teachers, Schools, Districts 1984-1998

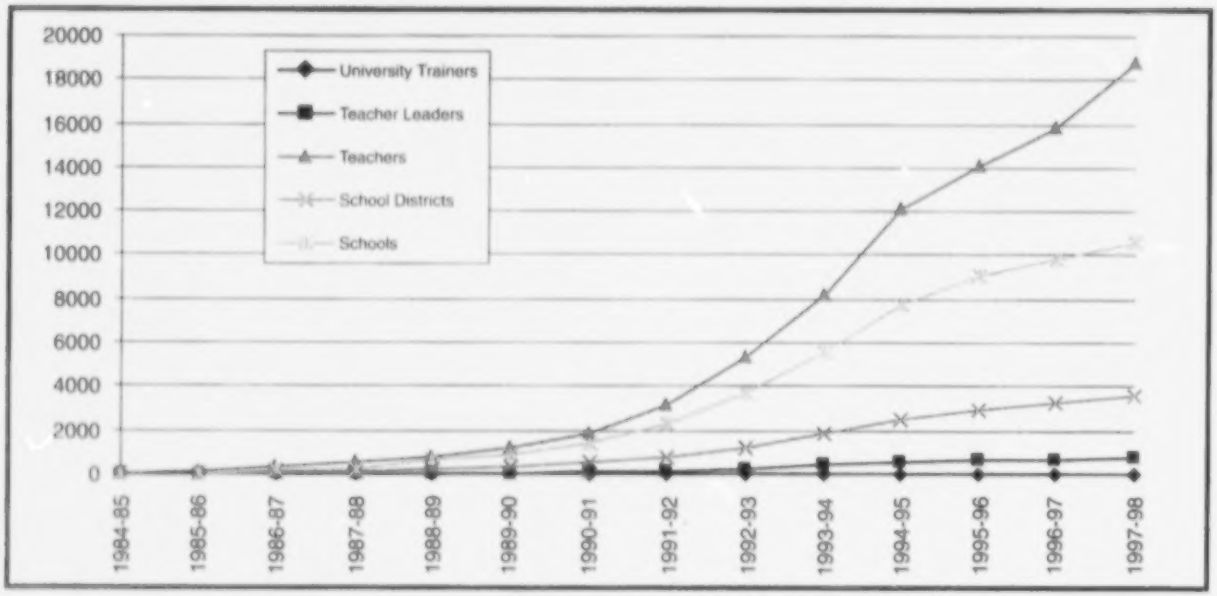

Table 2. U.S. University Trainers, Teacher Leaders, Teachers, School Districts, and Schools Participating in Reading Recovery from 1984 — 1998

Year	University Trainers	Teacher Leaders	Teachers	School Districts	Schools
1984-85	0	0	16	1	6
1985-86	1	3	58	23	35
1986-87	3	27	280	108	255
1987-88	3	45	531	143	227
1988-89	6	43	732	265	623
1989-90	11	54	1,163	332	892
1990-91	13	80	1,850	508	1,406
1991-92	19	155	3,164	798	2,336
1992-93	24	259	5,343	1,246	3,731
1993-94	33	388	8,182	1,905	5,523
1994-95	39	510	12,084	2,543	7,784
1995-96	39	625	14,153	2,939	9,062
1996-97	42	667	15,843	3,241	9,815
1997-98	35	739	18,831	3,596	10,612

Reading Recovery National Data Evaluation Center, The Ohio State University

Figure 3. Reading Recovery Children 1984-1998

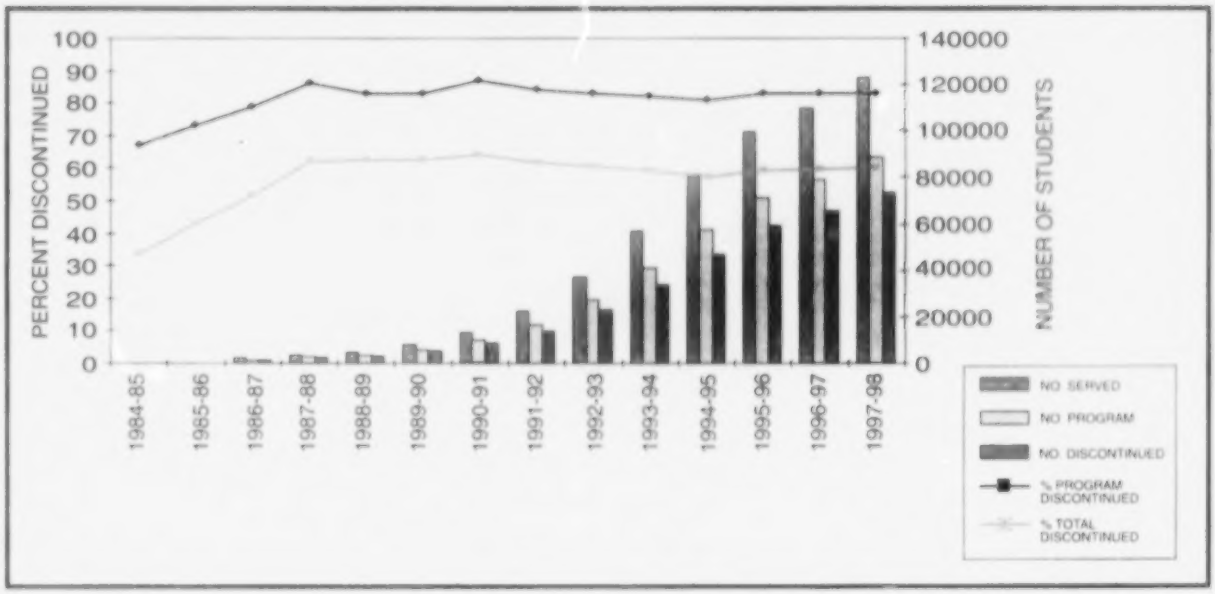

Table 3. U.S. Reading Recovery Children Served, Program Children and Percentage of Children Discontinued from 1984 — 1998

Year	Served**	Program***	Discontinued****	%
1984-85*	110	55	37	67%
1985-86	230	136	99	73%
1986-87	2,048	1,336	1,059	79%
1987-88	3,649	2,648	2,269	86%
1988-89	4,772	3,609	2,994	83%
1989-90	7,778	5,840	4,888	84%
1990-91	12,605	9,283	8,126	88%
1991-92	21,821	16,026	13,499	84%
1992-93	36,443	26,582	22,109	83%
1993-94	56,077	40,493	33,243	82%
1994-95	81,220	57,712	46,637	81%
1995-96	99,617	71,193	59,266	83%
1996-97	109,879	78,935	65,551	83%
1997-98	122,935	88,929	73,610	83%
Totals	559,184	402,777	333,387	83%

**Pilot Year: RR teachers were in training.*

***Served: Program children and children who entered Reading Recovery but did not receive a minimum of 60 lessons because they moved, were absent for extended periods of time, or the school year ended prior to completion of lessons. Column 1 is inclusive of the subcategory Program Children, column 2.*

****Program: RR children who received a minimum of 60 lessons or were discontinued prior to receiving 60 lessons.*

*****Discontinued: RR children who were released from the RR program reading within average band reading levels of the class.*

Does Reading Recovery Work?

Does Reading Recovery Work?

Research and Data Collection

The success of Reading Recovery has been carefully documented since its inception in New Zealand. Pilot studies in New Zealand and the United States demonstrate that the program empowers children in the lowest 20 percent of their class with the strategies necessary to read at or above grade level in about 20 weeks. Follow-up studies in both countries show further that Reading Recovery children continue to read at an average-or-better level after receiving the intervention, reducing the need for long-term remediation. These results have been replicated regionally throughout North America, and they continue to be supported by the work of the National Data Evaluation Center, which tracks the progress of every child served by Reading Recovery in the United States.

As Reading Recovery has grown, the academic community has shown interest in various effects of the program. Researchers have compared Reading Recovery with other intervention programs, evaluated its cost-effectiveness, and studied its long-term effects on children. Others have explored such areas as the success of the teacher training component and the impact of the program on learning disabled students. This research, combined with the data collected each year on children who receive the intervention, provides answers to some of the most commonly asked questions about Reading Recovery.

In 1997-1998, Reading Recovery teachers provided instruction for 122,935 children in the United States. Some children were lost because of mobility and other factors, but of the 88,929 children who received at least 60 lessons, 73,610 or 83 percent were successfully discontinued (see Table 1). The 18 percent whose programs were not discontinued, continued to make substantial progress in reading and writing (see Table 5 on page 25).

How do discontinued Reading Recovery students compare to their peers at the end of first grade?

Reading Recovery students, all of whom begin first grade at the lowest achievement levels of their class, make considerable progress as a result of the intervention and effective classroom instruction.

In the first study on Reading Recovery in the United States (See Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord, 1993, pp. 21-23) students were randomly assigned to Reading Recovery and to another intervention. Results indicated that 73.5 percent of the 136 students randomly assigned to

Reading Recovery were successfully released (discontinued) from the program. Over 90 percent of the students whose programs were discontinued were performing at average or above-average levels on four measures of reading ability at the end of first grade, and more than 70 percent were performing at average or above-average levels on three other measures of assessment. At the end of the year, the gain score of the Reading Recovery students on a nationally normed standardized test (CTBS) was 8.6, compared to a score of -2.4 earned by a similar group of first graders who had received another form of compensatory education.

The results of the early follow up studies have been replicated in regional and local investigations, including locations in Texas and in Nova Scotia and Halifax, Canada.

Are the gains made in Reading Recovery sustained over time?

Research indicates that Reading Recovery students not only become average or better readers in first grade, they develop a "self-extending" learning system which enables them to continue learning at least as quickly as their peers in later grades.

A follow-up study to the first Columbus study (see Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord, 1993) showed that students served in Reading Recovery maintained progress in second, third, and fourth grade.

Table 5. National Comparison of Fall and Spring Scores for Reading Recovery Children 1997-98 School Year — All Children tested at each point in time as reported below

Measure	Discontinued				Not Discontinued				Program			
	Fall		Spring		Fall		Spring		Fall		Spring	
	(Mean)	(N=)	(Mean)	(N=)	(Mean)	(N=)	(Mean)	(N=)	(Mean)	(N=)	(Mean)	(N=)
Writing Vocabulary	5.40	57,892	53.32	70,760	3.29	14,656	36.87	13,483	4.97	72,548	50.69	84,243
Hearing and Recording Sounds (HRS)	8.13	57,922	35.66	70,764	4.33	14,650	31.31	13,478	7.37	72,572	34.96	84,242
Text Reading Level	0.66	57,886	18.21	70,747	0.41	14,646	8.54	13,475	0.61	72,532	16.66	84,222

Discontinued Students: *Students who meet criteria established for independent reading, are able to successfully read at or above the average level in their class or school, as assessed on a set of reading achievement tests, and have been released from the program.*
Not Discontinued Students: *Students who receive the intervention but do not reach an average reading level.*
Program Students: *Reading Recovery Discontinued and Not Discontinued Children who have received a minimum of 60 lessons or were discontinued prior to receiving 60 lessons.*

Follow Up Studies

Reading Recovery is one of the most thoroughly evaluated intervention programs for low-progress, first grade students. Its effectiveness in bringing the lowest achieving students up to the average reading level of their peers in a short amount of time has been well documented (Allington & Walmsley, 1995; Wilson & Daviss, 1994). Personnel at Reading Recovery sites conduct their own evaluations which are linked to the database at The Ohio State University. These evaluations highlight the intersecting variables, many of which are not obvious even to those who teach in the program or who have studied it intensively. Teaching procedures, adjustment of instruction to learners, instructional decision-making, training, coaching, self-reflection, ongoing evaluation, and research -- all contribute to Reading Recovery's success. The design of the program supports these interacting variables and involves constant evaluation of the quality of each implementation.

Follow up studies from Texas and Massachusetts report on former Reading Recovery students whose programs were discontinued; that is, they reached average reading levels of their peers and therefore successfully completed the program. An Ohio follow up study reports data on three combined groups of Reading Recovery students: those whose programs were discontinued, those who were referred for additional support, and those who were served by Reading Recovery but received fewer than 60 lessons.

Texas

In a study reported in the Texas Woman's University's *Reading Recovery Report, 1988-1996, (Reading Recovery Report 1988-96,* 1996) researchers examined the literacy performance and teachers' perceptions of students in grades two, three, and four whose Reading Recovery programs were discontinued. Four instruments were used to measure literacy performance: a test of text reading level, a written retelling, the comprehension subtest of the Gates-MacGinite Reading Tests (GMRT), and a reading subtest of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). A questionnaire was designed to collect information about teachers' perceptions of their former Reading Recovery students.

The researchers' findings indicate that the literacy performance of children, whose Reading Recovery programs were discontinued, continues to remain in the average range of their peers. Retelling and oral reading measures showed similar performance for both former Reading Recovery students and non-Reading Recovery students. By fourth grade Reading Recovery students had become more similar to non-Reading Recovery students. Sixty-nine percent of Reading Recovery children achieved passing scores on the TAAS, compared to 76 percent of the non-Reading Recovery students. On the GMRT comprehension subtest, 67 percent of Reading Recovery children achieved a stanine score of four or greater, while 71 percent of non-Reading Recovery students achieved similar results.

The classroom teachers of the students who had been in Reading Recovery support these

findings. These teachers indicated by their responses to questionnaires that the former Reading Recovery students were still reading within the average range of their classmates.

Massachusetts

Researchers in Massachusetts recently conducted a statewide follow up study *(Reading Recovery Annual Report,* 1996). Two groups of third grade students were randomly selected from among students who had been in first grade in 1993-94. From that group, 101 Reading Recovery students whose programs had been discontinued were randomly selected. 104 students who had not received any Reading Recovery lessons also were randomly selected.

Five measures of literacy achievement were used to compare the two groups: a measure of text reading level, a story retelling, a dictation task, the Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT), and the comprehension subtest of the Gates-MacGinite Reading Test (GMRT).

Both groups scored well above grade level on the measure of text reading level with the Reading Recovery students scoring a mean text level of 30.7 and the non-Reading Recovery students achieving a mean level of 31. On the retelling measure, 95 percent of the Reading Recovery students' retellings were rated as "adequate" or "exceptional", compared to 92 percent of the non-Reading Recovery students. In addition, Reading Recovery students scored within the random sample's average band of achievement on the SORT and the GMRT. The dictation task was divided into two measures: phonemic awareness and spelling accuracy. Former Reading Recovery students scored within the random sample's average band on phonemic awareness and just below the average band on the spelling measure.

When classroom teachers were asked to describe how they perceived the literacy behaviors of the group who had been in Reading Recovery, they rated the students above average (a mean score of three or higher on a Likert scale) on all measures except writing ability. This slightly lower rating of 2.8 is consistent with the earlier mentioned finding that Reading Recovery students scored slightly lower on the spelling aspect of the dictation task. Otherwise, classroom teachers typically rated the former Reading Recovery students at

three or above (average or above) on important literacy behaviors such as "selects books on his/her own", "attitude toward reading", and "chooses to read when time allows."

This study demonstrates that this random selection of children whose Reading Recovery programs were discontinued are maintaining their proficiency in reading into the third grade.

Ohio

The students in the follow up studies from Texas and Massachusetts were selected only from groups of Reading Recovery students whose programs were discontinued successfully. The Ohio follow up study (Hovest & Day, 1997) examined the reading progress of both discontinued and non-discontinued program participants by including two cohorts of students served by Reading Recovery and identified by the program year.

The two cohort groups had been involved in the Reading Recovery intervention in either the 1991-1992 academic year or the 1992-1993 academic year. The sample included students whose Reading Recovery programs had been discontinued successfully (as they had reached the average reading level of their peers), students who did not reach the average reading level and had been referred for additional support (those whose programs were not discontinued), and children who did not have the benefit of a full program (those who received fewer than sixty lessons).

The researchers examined the performance of the cohorts on the Ohio Grade Four Proficiency Test. This is an achievement measure administered to fourth grade students in Ohio schools.

In the 1991-1992 cohort, 71 percent of the sample (including program and non-program students) scored **above** proficiency in reading. This same cohort scored just as well on the writing measure of the Proficiency Test with 72 percent of all Reading Recovery students scoring **above** proficiency in writing.

The second cohort, students who had been in first grade in 1992-1993, performed much like the first cohort. Seventy-five percent of all Reading Recovery students in this cohort scored **above** proficiency in reading, and 67 percent performed **above** proficiency on the writing measure.

The findings of the study suggest that all of these children, initially the lowest achievers in first grade who received Reading Recovery services, whether they had fewer than 60 lessons, whether they were discontinued or not, made substantial gains in reading and writing as demonstrated on the Ohio fourth grade proficiency test.

Summary

The findings reported here from three statewide follow up studies suggest that the firm foundation which Reading Recovery students build in first grade is still present into the second, third, and fourth grades. Standardized test scores collected at the end of grades two, three, and four suggest that Reading Recovery

children, in particular those whose programs were discontinued, maintain their gains and continue to make reading progress.

Reading Recovery demonstrates what is possible when we put into action what we know about how young children become literate. In doing so, Reading Recovery challenges present systems and prompts both visionary thinking and problem solving.

Early Intervention Program Comparisons

Large-scale and local investigations demonstrate that Reading Recovery is a particularly effective method for correcting the reading difficulties of at-risk children.

A 1991 statewide study in Ohio was the first to compare Reading Recovery with other types of early intervention (Pinnell, Lyons, DeFord, Bryk, & Seltzer, 1994). The Chicago-based John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation commissioned researchers at The Ohio State University to compare Reading Recovery with four other instructional methods: (1) Reading Success, an individual tutorial program similar to Reading Recovery, but taught by a teacher with an abbreviated training program; (2) Direct Instructional Skills Plan, an individual tutorial taught without Reading Recovery techniques by experienced reading teachers; (3) Reading-Writing Group, a small-group intervention taught by trained Reading Recovery teachers; and (4) a control group, which received a standard federally funded remediation program.

The final report concluded that Reading Recovery was the only group for which the mean treatment effect was significant on all four measures: Text Reading Level, Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words Assessment Task, Woodcock Reading Mastery, and Gates MacGinite. Reading Recovery was also the only intervention program indicating lasting effects.

Specifically, the analysis showed that Reading Recovery children performed significantly better than children from an equivalent control group and the three other intervention programs. Reading Recovery was the only intervention that showed long-term improvements in reading. At the end of the 70 days of instruction, Reading Recovery children were reading five levels ahead of children who received regular remedial reading lessons. Even though (in contrast to Reading Recovery children) the control group continued to receive lessons for the rest of the year, Reading Recovery children were still three reading levels above the remedial group average when all children were tested the following autumn.

Researchers concluded that Reading Recovery was more effective with first-grade readers than either conventional remedial techniques or Reading Recovery's individual aspects used separately. Reading Recovery's effectiveness was attributed to its unique combination of individual tutoring, extensive reading and writing during lessons, and a carefully structured program of thorough ongoing teacher training. The researchers argued that educational policy makers need to recognize not only the power of early intervention with first-grade readers, but also the crucial importance

of well-grounded, long-term teacher training and staff development.

Reading Recovery Cost Effectiveness

Evidence indicates that Reading Recovery can reduce costs associated with at-risk students by lowering retention rates and thereby reducing the need for remediation and special education classifications.

Dyer (1992) found that, while Reading Recovery requires an initial and ongoing investment, its implementation is educationally sound and reduces the necessity of more commonly used means of intervention. The analysis indicates that school districts implementing the program will realize significant long-term cost savings through reductions in grade retentions, remedial Title 1 services, and special education placements. Savings in these areas can more than offset the short-term costs of implementing and operating the Reading Recovery program.

Researchers also have examined Reading Recovery's ability to reduce first-grade retentions, the need for further remediation, and the number of students classified as learning disabled, with positive results.

Lyons and Beaver (1995) found that the first-grade retention rate in an Ohio school district that had implemented Reading Recovery dropped from 4.3 percent in the three years before implementation to 2.9 percent four years after system wide implementation. The same study showed that the district investment reduced its enrollment in learning disability classrooms at the end of first grade from 32 students (1.8 percent of the first grade) in the three years before full implementation to 10 students (0.64 percent of the first grade) in three years after implementation.

In their book *Partners in Learning*, Lyons, Pinnell, and DeFord document the experience of a district that reduced its first-grade retentions by 33 in five years following the implementation of Reading Recovery, saving approximately $170,000 (Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord 1993, p. 27).

The impact of Reading Recovery extends beyond the students and teachers involved directly in the program. Researchers have also noted instances of districts where Title 1 teachers have become familiar with aspects of the program and have used their newly acquired information to restructure Title 1 classes in ways that significantly reduce the need for Title 1 services beyond first grade (Lyons, Pinnell, & DeFord, 1993, p. 28).

Reading Recovery does require a substantial financial commitment. However, considering its capacity for reducing the need for more costly interventions beyond first grade, it is a sound investment.

Students Who Are Not Successfully Discontinued

Reading Recovery is not a panacea. Each year, a percentage of the students assigned to the program are not successfully discontinued. Some move from the district before their program is complete, while others are picked up at the end of the year and do not have time to complete their program. A small percentage

of those who complete the program do not achieve average progress and require further special services. (See Table 1 on page 9).

The National Diffusion Network has monitored the progress of these children, and the results are optimistic. In 1997-1998, the National Data Evaluation Center reported that of the 88,929 children who completed a Reading Recovery program, 15,319 students were not successfully discontinued. These children nevertheless made important gains on measures of Writing Vocabulary, Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words, and Text Reading.

What Program Participants Say

The effects of Reading Recovery extend far beyond the children served. In questionnaires administered at sites across North America, parents, administrators, and classroom teachers, as well as Reading Recovery teachers and students, discussed how the program affected them.

Parents' Reactions to Reading Recovery

Parents across North America have expressed gratitude toward the Reading Recovery program for helping their children become confident, competent readers. A parent from Sheffield, OH said, *"What parent does not delight in seeing the spark in their child's eye, the 'light bulb' turning on in their little heads? Reading Recovery effects are far-reaching. The student may be tackling reading skills, but along with success comes the intrinsic feeling of self-worth."* A Department of Defense Schools' parent said, *"Through the positive manner in which she was taught to read she has a better feeling about herself as a person and enjoys challenging herself."* An Aurora, CO parent said, *"My hope for Reading Recovery is that it has a long life for other children, and parents, so they may have the great experience we had! It gives kids and parents hope, that turns it into reality! They will read!!"* A Westbrook, MA parent commented, *"Reading Recovery was a crucial element in my child's early education. If Reading Recovery had not been an option for him, reading (and many other subjects) would have been a constant failure. This program has provided the support that he needed to be successful."*

A Madison, WI parent noticed carry-over into other subjects, *"His positive attitude about reading then carried over to math and other new subjects in his first grade learning!"* A Monroe County, GA parent noticed the importance of the approach to teaching, *"We were very impressed with the approach and teaching process. The kids are made to feel smart and special instead of slow."* Other parents likewise noticed confidence in their children. A Tupelo, MS parent said, *"My child now has the confidence to read or attempt to read anything she sees."*

Perhaps an Anderson, IN parent sums it up best, *"All in all my first grade, 7 year old son says he is a big boy now because he was finally able to read. He has developed more patience also. I would like, as a parent, to thank you very much for providing this program: it is fantastic. My child does not use the words, 'I can't.' Now it is 'I'll try' or 'I will'.*

He is one excited big guy about being able to read!"

Administrators' Reactions

Administrators from various sites shared positive reactions to Reading Recovery. Some stated that the program reduces retention and special education referrals and placements. An Indianapolis administrator said, *"It has helped non-readers in grade 1 advance to readers from lower to high reading groups. It has kept students from being retained."* An El Paso, TX administrator said, *"Fewer students are being retained. Our special education referrals are down; self-esteem is up! Staff members are believers in the program."* An administrator from Fox Chapel, Duquesne University Site in Pennsylvania said, *"The Reading Recovery program has strengthened the service provided to our students. Retention and special education placements have decreased due to the improvements in reading skills of these students. The four year trend in our data reflects this."*

Other staff have also benefited from the Reading Recovery program. An Ellsworth, MI administrator said, *"This is not a staff that jumps easily on 'bandwagons'. The fact that there is such school wide support is a measure of how good the Reading Recovery program is!"* A Newark, OH administrator commented, *"Classroom teachers in my building are less frustrated because they have the Reading Recovery teacher to support the learning of struggling readers."*

The gains made by the children are also noted. An administrator from Middletown, RI commented, *"In our first year of operation classroom teachers and I have noticed significant improvement in the reading skills of Reading Recovery students. I have never seen children improve this dramatically in a short period of time. I believe the Reading Recovery program is superb from every perspective."* A South Puget Sound, WA administrator states results at his school quite clearly, *"No non-readers at first grade."* Finally, an East Pennsboro, PA administrator noticed the impact of full implementation, *"Full implementation of Reading Recovery showed us the true power of the program. The improvement of so many at-risk readers in Reading Recovery enabled classroom teachers to work more with the rest of the classroom resulting in very dramatic results."*

Classroom Teachers' Reactions

Classroom teachers in Reading Recovery schools wrote about the improvements they saw in their children as a result of Reading Recovery. Many discussed the improvement in the students' abilities. *"The children make*

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connections, both verbal and nonverbal, between the Reading Recovery strategies and classroom language activities," said one St. Mary's, CA teacher. A teacher in Prince George's County, MD said, *"Not only do my Reading Recovery students become better readers, they become better students. They are more motivated to learn, they participate in class and share the strategies they are learning. Their self-esteem improves as their reading ability increases. They seem to begin to love reading."*

The enthusiasm of Reading Recovery students was likewise noted. A classroom teacher from Georgia stated, *"I have seen a great increase in the confidence level of each of my Reading Recovery students. My Reading Recovery students are more eager to read in the classroom."* A Boston, MA teacher said, *"Students are enthusiastic about reading. Students are participating more in shared and guided reading. They can't wait to read! They are more focused and task oriented and read during free time."* A Durand, MI teacher said, *"While in Reading Recovery the children begin to view themselves as readers. They are successful in the program and that carries over into the classroom. They are more apt to try new books in our class. They are less afraid to take a risk. When successfully completing a book in class they literally beam. They choose to read as a free time choice."* A Clackamas County, OR teacher said, *"The Reading Recovery student became fully integrated into classroom reading and has also become a leader."* Finally, expressing satisfaction at the overall benefits of the program, a Warren City, OH teacher said, *"I can't say enough good things about this program! Reading Recovery truly helps children 'put the pieces together' and become successful readers."*

Impact of the Program on Reading Recovery Teachers and Teacher Leaders

Reading Recovery teachers from many different sites shared the impact that Reading Recovery training has had on their professional development. *"Finally, I have been able to get a grasp on how the reading process works,"* wrote one teacher in training from Vallejo, CA. *"For the first time I feel able to help all children learn to read. Even the lowest two or three in every class."* A teacher in Chula Vista, CA said, *"I have learned more in this program than in any other class I have taken. The opportunity to observe my colleagues teach children while being guided in my thinking and observing by such knowledgeable, articulate teacher leaders has been a unique and valuable learning experience."* A Walled Lake, MI teacher said, *"It [Reading Recovery] has made me more personally accountable for each and every teaching decision I make. It has helped me to teach for strategies rather than item knowledge. . even in the classroom teaching aspects of my day."* A Concord, NH teacher said, *"The tolls of Behind The Glass, clinical observations, and colleague visits have held me accountable to what I was learning and have been the catalyst for professional and personal growth."* A Marion, OH teacher in training expressed that *"Reading Recovery training has made me more able to stand up for the children when faced with negative comments from colleagues. I have really been made to think about how children learn and to validate each child's learning."*

A Jacksonville, FL teacher said, *"I have become a better observer of children's behaviors. I have learned how to interpret these behaviors as signals of learning, which helps me decide what my next teaching behavior will be. It has changed my whole philosophy about the teaching and learning and how it should be student driven, not teacher driven. It has helped me to observe, interpret, and make decisions about my own teaching behavior."*

Reading Recovery teachers also felt empowered by their ability to help the lowest progressing students. A Fall River, MA teacher said, revealed that, *"Seeing the reading progress of a couple of my first-round students who started extremely low was rewarding, especially when I realized that I had in a part in their reading successes."* A St Charles Parish, LA teacher said, *"Reading Recovery training has been the highlight of my teaching career! So often at-risk children fall through the cracks. Now we can help them and make a difference that will last a lifetime. I'm thrilled to be a part of that."*

Children's Reactions

Those children who have directly benefited from Reading Recovery instruction are anxious to share their new knowledge with everyone. A first-grader from Waco, TX, said, *"It's fun to take books home...so my mom will be happy I know how to read."* Another Reading Recovery student from Forest Hills, OH discussed her new abilities: *"I am a good reader because I read a lot. I look at the pictures to help. I go back and reread. I look at a word to get another word."* A young reader and writer in Longview, TX said, *"I feel good and great because I can read a lot of things. Now I can help myself and I don't need my Reading Recovery teacher to help me."* A Putnam City, OK first grader sums it up with her comment, *"Reading Recovery helps you read better and think smart!"*

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Appendix

Appendix

Reading Recovery: A Part of Comprehensive School Reform

Congressional approval of the Obey-Porter Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) Act has increased interest nationwide in Reading Recovery. While Reading Recovery is not considered a comprehensive school reform model in this legislation, Reading Recovery can be *an important part of a comprehensive reform model.* Reading Recovery exemplifies eight of the nine essential elements which are a part of the requirements of the Obey-Porter legislation. More specifically Reading Recovery includes:

- Effective, research-based, replicable methods and strategies
- Professional development
- Measurable goals and benchmarks
- Support within the school
- Parental and community involvement
- External technical support and assistance
- Evaluation strategies
- Coordination of resources

Reading Recovery is designed to be the early intervention component of a comprehensive literacy program. The implementation of Reading Recovery in a school provides opportunities for school personnel to address issues related to curriculum for early literacy, classroom instruction in conjunction with specialized tutoring services, assessment through use of the *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement,* professional development through the rigorous and proven professional development model embedded in the Reading Recovery program, and parental involvement in the daily home follow-up of the Reading Recovery lesson.

Reading Recovery provides a safety net for tutoring those first grade students who are at risk of failing to learn to read and write. As an early intervention program, Reading Recovery supports the lowest achieving students in the first grade population of a school. The program assists children in developing the reading and writing capacities which bring them up to the average performance levels in their classes and enables them to continue to be successful in school. Reading Recovery reduces the number of children whose scores fall below the average on standardized tests of achievement. The short-term intervention works in coordination with good first teaching in the classroom to insure that students will meet the expectation of the first grade and will be successful as they move beyond first grade. Reading Recovery has proven to be an excellent intervention for reducing retentions and referrals to long term programs. In instances

where referral for additional assessment and service is needed, Reading Recovery provides a base of information not otherwise available from which to develop appropriate ongoing individualized educational interventions.

Effective, Research-based Replication

Reading Recovery is built on a foundation of more than thirty years of research about how young low-achieving children take on the process of reading and writing. From Marie Clay's early school and clinical based research through today's continuing evaluation of the program's effectiveness, Reading Recovery has focused on using growth in understanding about how children learn to read and write while remaining grounded in sound, well-developed theory. Change in Reading Recovery is a deliberate, careful, ongoing process based on continuous research in language and literacy learning and teaching as well as on research and evaluation directly related to the program. Changes in Reading Recovery practice are gradually assimilated through required, ongoing professional development at all levels of Reading Recovery training and practice.

Reading Recovery has fourteen years of demonstrated effectiveness in the United States as reported in numerous studies conducted by external and internal researchers. Research has been conducted using random sample comparison groups, various standardized tests, three and four year follow-up models and local (rural, suburban, and urban) and statewide analyses. The research demonstrates that children who are successful in Reading Recovery sustain their gains and continue to progress with their peers at least through the fourth grade. Data beyond the fourth grade is generally not available.

Professional Development

The Reading Recovery model provides strong, abundant, pre-implementation training and onsite follow up coaching and technical assistance. Reading Recovery teacher training is graduate level instruction provided by Reading Recovery teacher leaders at approved district-level training sites. The training prepares experienced classroom teachers to provide Reading Recovery to children in their schools. During the training year, teachers attend weekly classes, work with at least eight children over the year, and participate in onsite school visits with their instructor and colleagues.

Teacher training begins with a yearlong curriculum that integrates theory and practice and is characterized by intensive interaction and reflection with colleagues. Teachers in training teach children in front of their colleagues behind a one way glass. The behind the glass lesson serves as shared experience for the group to discuss. After the first year of training, Reading Recovery teachers participate in at least six continuing contact sessions with their teacher leader during each year of Reading Recovery teaching.

Teacher leaders are required to have a Masters degree and to attend a yearlong residential training program at one of the 23 university training centers in the United States. The teacher leaders provide training for teachers and serve as the leader of the Reading Recovery teacher training site.

Measurable Goals

Reading Recovery has specific measurable goals for each child. These goals include bringing the child's reading and writing performance into or above the average band of reading and writing in his/her class and developing within the child a self-extending system which enables him/her to continue to progress without one-on-one assistance. The achievement of these goals is measurable using the *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* as well as standardized tests and classroom performance.

Support Within the School

Reading Recovery must be adopted by a school or a district through whatever method is used to make such decisions. In the most successful implementations, good first teaching in the classroom is supported by Reading Recovery as an early intervention and by other educational programs for students who need longer term or more specialized services following the Reading Recovery intervention. Collaboration and team decision-making among key staff members (Reading Recovery teachers, classroom teachers, special focus teachers -Title I, special education, reading specialists, and others- and principals) also are typical of schools with especially strong implementations of Reading Recovery.

Parent and Community Involvement

Reading Recovery requires parental permission and encourages parents to assist in the tutoring process. Students take home books to read and cut-up stories to reassemble each night. Parents are encouraged to listen to their child read each evening and to reinforce the day's lesson. Reading Recovery also encourages opportunities for children to read to volunteers who visit the classroom to assist in early literacy learning. The volunteer program is generally a part of the school's larger effort to involve parents and community members in supporting early literacy learning.

External Technical Support

The university training centers provide ongoing technical support and assistance to the Reading Recovery teacher leaders trained at each center. This ongoing supportive role includes professional development opportunities within the nationwide Reading Recovery network. It also includes assistance with implementation issues such as funding, scheduling, selection of children, and teacher training. In addition, technical assistance includes attention to work with the most difficult to teach students.

Evaluation Strategies

Reading Recovery consistently and constantly evaluates and monitors implementation and student achievement. Each child is assessed formally prior to entering the program, again upon leaving the program, and at the end of the school year. This assessment provides direct accountability for the child s progress, as well as, a record of strengths and continuing needs for the child. Each Reading Recovery lesson includes taking a running

record of the child's reading of a text that has been read only once previously. Each running record provides the teacher with information about the child's current ways of responding to text and informs subsequent teaching decisions.

Data for all children served are compiled annually at the school, district, site and national levels. These data result from the assessment reporting provided by Reading Recovery teachers on each of their students. The data are compiled into reports at each level. The reports are used for monitoring the implementation and for providing direction for changes to improve the effectiveness of the implementation. In addition to the data generated by the assessment of each child, each report contains information gathered from classroom teachers, administrators, and parents to provide further insight into the impact of the implementation. Assistance is available from the National Data Evaluation Center at The Ohio State University in compiling and analyzing the data. In addition, teacher leaders and site coordinators assist individual schools in analyzing their implementation of Reading Recovery.

Coordination of Resources

Reading Recovery teacher leaders and site coordinators are responsible for working with individual districts and schools to create the funding base required for implementation of Reading Recovery. Because trained Reading Recovery teachers generally spend only one half of their day teaching Reading Recovery students, the other portion of their day is available to the school to use creatively to meet other educational needs. Reading Recovery teachers typically serve as Title 1 teachers, classroom teachers, reading specialists, early literacy specialists, or perform other essential roles in a particular school.

Funding for Reading Recovery comes from a wide variety of sources, including, but not limited to:

- Local and state general funds
- Title 1 funds
- Migrant education funds
- Dropout education funds
- Early childhood support funds
- Drug prevention funds
- Special education funds
- Professional development funds
- Flexible staffing funds
- Bilingual and English as a second language funds
- Alternative education funds
- Minority groups targeted funds
- Local assessment funds
- Special early intervention initiative funds
- Foundation, corporation, or other private funds (especially for training).

Exploring Misconceptions Associated With Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery continues to grow and expand within the United States and across the world. With this growth, an expanded body of research continues to accumulate. Those interested in Reading Recovery, as well as those who are critical of the program, seek explanations and clarifications surrounding the many facets of the program. *Reading Recovery Review: Understandings, Outcomes and Implications* (Askew, Fountas, Lyons, Pinnell, & Schmitt, 1998), in an effort to explicate the aspects of the Reading Recovery program that seem to resurface continuously, describes the program, responds to misconceptions, reviews current research and responds to major challenges that have appeared in both academic and general publications. Outstanding researchers in the field of reading reviewed the document. The researchers' comments were taken into consideration in producing a publication that not only is a resource for Reading Recovery stakeholders -- teachers, administrators, parents, legislators and other policy makers -- but, also serves as a reference for responding to criticisms of the Reading Recovery program.

Three common misconceptions that are addressed within *Reading Recovery Review: Understandings, Outcomes and Implications* are explored below. The three commonly confused issues include questions often posed related to: 1) alignment of Reading Recovery with specific classroom approaches; 2) teaching Reading Recovery students about letters, sounds, and words; and 3) incorporation of Reading Recovery into a classroom or small group program.

Alignment of Reading Recovery with Specific Classroom Approaches

Reading Recovery is not aligned with any specific classroom approach. Clay (1991) suggests that children take different paths to becoming literate and that successful readers emerge from various types of classroom programs. Reading Recovery is designed to offer additional help to individual children who are struggling to learn to read and write regardless of the methodologies being used within the classroom for reading and writing instruction. Because Reading Recovery students, through one to one tutorial lessons, are developing a network of strategies for reading and writing that go beyond isolated skill knowledge, they are able to apply their literacy knowledge within the framework of any classroom approach provided that the approach is well taught.

Teaching About Letters, Sounds, and Words

A frequently asked question that often leads to misconceptions associated with Reading Recovery is the role of "phonics". Reading Recovery teachers give specific and explicit attention to letters, sounds and words both while writing extended text and as direct instruction within each Reading Recovery lesson. The program recognizes that decoding is purposeful. Teachers help children learn to use connections between letters and sounds and their knowledge of how words work in order to problem solve difficult words on the run while maintaining meaning. Reading Recovery teachers understand the critical nature of helping children hear phonemes in

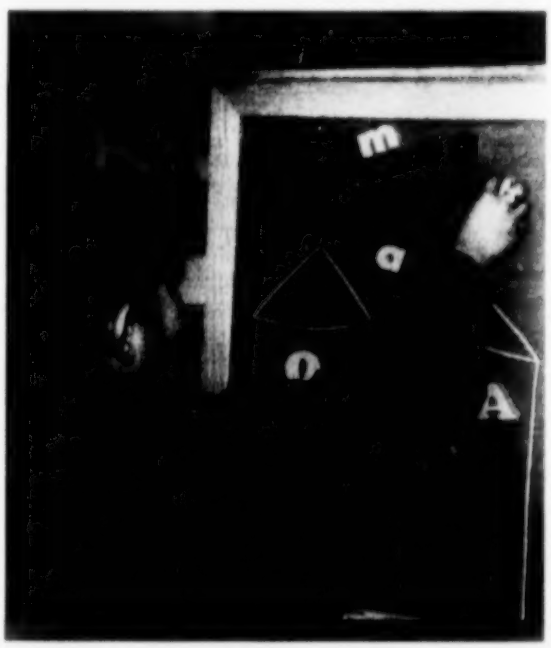
ognize and use spelling patterns. Students apply this knowledge of sound/symbol and symbol/sound relationships while reading and writing.

Marilyn Adams (1990) acknowledged in a comprehensive review of research on beginning reading instruction that Reading Recovery explicitly recognizes the importance of phonological and linguistic awareness and that the program is designed with a thorough appreciation of phonics in mind. Several research studies (Iverson & Tunmer, 1993; Stahl, Stahl, & McKenna, in press; Sylva & Hurry, 1996) examine the effectiveness of the phonological aspects of the Reading Recovery program. Each study consistently found that Reading Recovery students perform well on measures of phonological processing.

Classroom or Small Group Implementation of Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery is **not** a classroom program or a program that can be implemented in a small group situation. Reading Recovery is designed to work from the individual child's knowledge and responses. This close observation is a difficult task for a teacher who is working with a group of children. Classroom teachers or teachers working with a small literacy group must make decisions for the benefit of the group rather than focusing their attention on the needs of one particular child. The meticulous, intensive instruction provided within the Reading Recovery lesson is not something that is needed for the majority of students in the educational setting.

Marie Clay's book, *Becoming Literate: The Construction of Inner Control*, which was written for classroom teachers interested in literacy acquisition, explores her theory about how children learn to read and write. The patterns of literacy development examined in this book apply to all children learning about literacy regardless of their language, origin, or instructional program. With good preschool experiences and a good curriculum for early literacy learning, most children will learn to read without special intervention. Reading Recovery is a safety net reserved for the individual child who is being left behind to help bring the child back into the average band.



Phonological Awareness and Reading Recovery[1]

A frequently asked question about any program designed to teach literacy concerns the role of "phonics." Phonics is usually described as "instruction in the relationship between letters and speech sounds." The goal of phonics is not that children are able to state 'rules' governing letter-sound relationships. Rather, the purpose is to get across the alphabetical principle, the principle that there are systematic relationships between letters and sounds. Phonics ought to be conceived as a technique for getting children off to a fast start in mapping relationships between letters and sounds.

A body of research suggests that development of phonological processing and learning to read are reciprocal processes. In other words, it may be that children learn to attend to the abstract sounds of language in the process of learning to read, and that attending leads to further reading development. Two elements are involved: phonological processing and orthographic processing. The phonology of a language is the sound system - the way sounds are put together to form meaningful units that are intelligible to speakers. Orthographic processing is the ability to analyze visually the appearance and structure of words. Alphabetic reading requires both the awareness of sounds and the knowledge of how orthographic patterns, such as "-eep" are pronounced.

Orthographic knowledge requires a surprising amount of prerequisite knowledge. First, children need to know how and where to look for salient visual information. Second, children must recognize and distinguish between letters. They also need to know how letters work to form words and how spelling patterns are mapped onto meaning and pronunciation. In short, orthographic processing relies first on visual perception of print and second on knowledge of how the alphabetic system works. Orthographic processing is strongly linked to development of the early concepts about print because it requires that children know how and where to look at print. It is also strongly linked with phonemic awareness through the mapping of sound onto letters, graphemes and syllables.

Helping the lowest performing first graders to get off to a fast start is certainly our goal in Reading Recovery. Instruction in the program explicitly recognizes phonological awareness and orthographic knowledge; however, for any form of phonics instruction to be helpful to many of the Reading Recovery children, we must also establish basic concepts about print, like the difference between a word and a letter and the directional conventions of English. These concepts are learned in the context of reading books and writing messages. Only in connected texts can children learn the hierarchical and sequential constraints in literacy strategies.

Initially many children rely on their strengths in oral language to read predictable books using meaning and structure cues. As children progress in their literacy learning, the set of cues used, and internal strategies for orchestrating cues, extends to include a variety of visual and phonological information. These strategies include and go well beyond the

[1] RRCNA is especially indebted to Robert M. Schwartz, Oakland University; Paula Moore, University of Maine; Maribeth Schmitt, Purdue University; Mary Anne Doyle, University of Connecticut; and Judith Neal, California State University, Fresno, for the ideas represented in this section.

limited relationship between letters and sounds usually emphasized in phonics based programs. Because this information is learned in the context of reading and writing connected text, the child's developing knowledge of letter/sound relationships is integrated into a network of literacy strategies.

Letter/sound knowledge, phonological awareness, strategies for monitoring by sound/letter relationships and searching for letter/sound cues are developed across the Reading Recovery lesson, for example:

(1) In writing, children compose their own messages working with support to hear and record sounds in selected words to extend their phonological awareness and knowledge of sound to letter relationships.

(2) "Making and breaking" is a part of the Reading Recovery lesson that involves children in the manipulation of magnetic letters to notice connections between words, clusters of letters or parts of words, and to go from known words to make new words - that is, they learn how words work.

(3) As children encounter challenging new texts every day, they have practice in orchestrating the processes of searching, checking, and using phonological information in connection with meaning and knowledge of language syntax.

(4) When children have difficulty while reading, teachers help them to link what they know about familiar words and how words work to search for additional cues within words, and solve their difficulty by analogy to known words within the context of reading text for meaning.

(5) Finally, the texts used in Reading Recovery are rich in information, providing support for children "behaving like readers" even though they know very little at the beginning. The few words and letter-sound relationships they know can be used as "islands of certainty" to check on their reading. Teacher guidance gives children maximum opportunity to practice using knowledge of letters, clusters and sounds which are embedded in meaningful text.

Our approach to phonics does not involve following a prescribed, predefined, sequence that would be the same for every student. Instead, instruction in this area, as in all aspects of a child's program, depends on careful observation of what the child already knows and teacher judgment about how this knowledge can best be extended. Many children learn all they need about letter/sound relationships in the process of writing messages; other children are engaged in activities designed to extend their meager knowledge of letters and words.

Time is not wasted teaching what is already known. Teachers use their records of the child's literacy progress to make powerful teaching points and to prompt the child to engage in problem solving. This reading work results in a self-extending set of literacy strategies that works with increasingly complex text by efficiently processing the details of print

while maintaining a focus on meaning.

Our instructional approaches combine our best understandings of how children learn, the contributions of oral language development to this area of learning, the reciprocity of reading and writing, and more current research. In the final analysis, we recognize phonological awareness and orthographic knowledge. We do so with an economy of attention for the most important goal, operating effectively in real reading.

Facing the Challenge of Learning Disabilities[2]

In a recently published document, *Learning Disabilities - A Barrier to Literacy Instruction* (1995), the International Reading Association (IRA) strongly expresses its concern over the growing number of "learning disabled" children in this country. The IRA notes that over half of the children who are labeled as handicapped are categorized as learning disabled, a figure that has doubled over the last ten years (p. 2).

How does one account for this dramatic increase in the number of learning disabled children? The IRA states that the definition of learning disabled has come to mean "a lack of progress in core academic subjects," and that "millions of children are intentionally being labeled as 'learning disabled' in an attempt to gain some support for extra services" (p. 2).

The IRA goes further to identify Reading Recovery as a program that not only teaches children how to read but reduces the number of students who are labeled "learning disabled" and the number of students who are placed in remedial reading programs.

The view that Reading Recovery can reduce the number of children labeled as learning disabled is not a new one. Clay (1987) noted that:

> Reading Recovery should clear out of the remedial education system those who don't learn to read for many event-produced reasons and those with "organically caused problems" but who can be taught to read and write independently despite this, leaving a small group of children still requiring specialist attention. p. 169

Several studies have documented that Reading Recovery does in fact reduce the numbers of students referred for more specialized attention. Lyons (1994) reports that in Ohio the number of Reading Recovery program students (those who received a minimum of 60 lessons or whose programs were discontinued prior to receiving 60 lessons) referred for learning disabilities screening dropped from 1.26 percent to just 0.51 percent over the period 1988-1993.

Additional evidence that Reading Recovery has an impact on the learning disabled population comes from a national study conducted by Schmidt (reported in Lyons, 1994). This study examined the rate of referring first graders (not only Reading Recovery students) to learning disabilities services prior to and after one to two years of each district's implementing Reading Recovery. The results of this national study show that even though Reading Recovery children typically made up just 10 to 15 percent of the first grade population, the rate of referring first graders for learning disabilities services decreased from 2.3 percent prior to the program's implementation to 1.3 percent one to two years after implementation.

The Massachusetts legislature reached a similar conclusion after conducting a seven month study of research related to Reading Recovery. Their study confirmed the success of the Reading Recovery program, its ability to

[2] RRCNA greatly appreciates Emily Rodgers, The Ohio State University, for her contribution to this section.

impact retention, its cost effectiveness, and its ability to defer children from special education services (Moriarty, 1996).

Research supports the view that Reading Recovery reduces the number of first grade students referred for learning disabilities services, but how can this reduction be explained? The IRA report, *Learning Disabilities - A Barrier to Literacy Instruction* (1995), singles out Reading Recovery's staff development approach of ongoing, intensive training, as being integral to the program's ability to impact the number of learning disabled students. This intensive training means that Reading Recovery teachers are well-equipped "to be more discriminating when classifying students who need more support" (p. 11).

In addition, the program provides an opportunity for teachers to separate first grade students who may be low achieving from those with more severe learning problems (Lyons, 1994). This smaller number of students then can be considered for more specialized help.

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